

resemblance to the genus *Carassiops* (Ogilby, *Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W.*, vol. 21, 1895) but the new species differs in having 45 to 50 scales longitudinally instead of less than 30. Additionally my examination of species of the genus *Carassiops* shows the scale cirri to be complex instead of simple.

Specimens were obtained on September 25-26 from Wilgia Mia Pool, a billabong approximately half a mile long by 75 yards wide, with an average depth of 5 feet and located 30 miles upstream from the mouth of the Murehison River.

The fish were caught by seining with a fine mesh net through dense clumps of submerged aquatic vegetation. They appeared to be fairly numerous. Several fish were brought down to Perth alive and placed in a 5-gallon aquarium where they lived for 15 months. All the specimens died at the onset of the hot summer weather. Postmortem examination revealed excessive obesity, most probably due to the constant food supply which would be contrary to natural conditions in a densely populated billabong. They were not an aggressive fish and took prepared dried foods readily. No courtship display was witnessed during the period of observation and no sexual characteristics could be determined externally.

CUCKOO NOTES FROM THE MORAWA DISTRICT

By S. R. WHITE, Government School, Morawa.

Narrow-billed Bronze Cuckoo (*Chalcites basalıs*):

While watching the nest building and feeding of Crimson Chats (*Epthianura tricolor*) during October, 1949 (*Western Australian Naturalist*, vol. 2, 1950, p. 49), my attention was frequently drawn to a pair of Narrow-billed Bronze Cuckoos which had been calling persistently. The *Handbook of the Birds of Western Australia*, Serventy and Whittell, 1948, p. 237, lists the Crimson Chat among recorded foster parents of this species.

As several Chats' nests were crowded into this small area, I had expected that the Cuckoos would certainly use Chats' nests in which to place their eggs. Strangely, the Crimson Chats were completely ignored and a pair of Red-capped Robins (*Petroeca goodenovii*) were selected. The Cuckoo's egg was found on October 10 with two Robin's eggs in a nest in a neighbouring jam patch. Six Red-capped Robins' nests with eggs or young had already been found in this area between August 6 and September 3, and the nest containing the Cuckoo's egg was probably a second brood.

Why should the Cuckoos have ignored the many nests of the Crimson Chats—a recorded foster parent—to seek out that of the only Red-capped Robins breeding there at the time? The answer to this problem may be suggested by the fact that the Chats are apparently not a regular local breeding species. The Robins are. Five nests were known in that area in 1948. Does this obvious preference indicate that certain individual Cuckoos always fix their attentions upon a particular species of foster parent as some bird observers claim?



Male Red-capped Robin at nest with young.

—Photo S. R. White.

Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus pallidus*):

On September 3, 1949 I watched an adult Pallid Cuckoo feeding another adult Pallid Cuckoo in a dead tree opposite the Morawa Post Office. I concluded from the two different calls used by the birds some few minutes later that they were a mated pair and that the feeding was associated in some way with courtship behaviour.

Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis pyrrhophanus*):

On August 14, 1949 I flushed a female Redthroat (*Pyrrholaemus brunneus*) from a nest in a small tuft of grass. The nest contained two eggs of the Redthroat and one of the Fan-tailed Cuckoo. I returned on the morning of August 20 and found that the young cuckoo had just hatched. It had already ejected one of the Redthroat's eggs and was struggling with the other. At 12.30 p.m. the



Nest of Redthroat, with eggs ejected into the entrance by the young Fan-tailed Cuckoo.

—Photo S. R. White.

second egg lay in the entrance, and the female Redthroat flushed. As an experiment I returned both eggs to the nest, and was able to witness their expulsion within three minutes.

The young cuckoo appeared to roll an egg on to its shoulders where it was held between the raised wings and upthrust head. After a short pause the nestling turned its back to the entrance and by stretching its legs to the utmost was able to roll the egg over the rim of the entrance. At 2.30 p.m. I repeated the experiment but could not again stimulate the nestling cuckoo to throw the eggs out. To all appearances the impulse to perform this act had been lost.

IMMIGRATION OF THE INDIAN CROW TO WESTERN AUSTRALIA

[Editor's note: In *The Birds of the Swan River District*, 1948, p. 18, D. L. Serventy has summarised the known records of the Indian or Ceylon Crow (*Corvus splendens*) being transported to Fremantle by ships from Colombo. See also *A Handbook of the Birds of Western Australia* by Serventy and Whittell, 1948, p. 339. In *The Emu*, vol. 49, 1949, p. 83 A. R. McGill refers to an additional record and speculates that "if we know, therefore, of eight instances of this bird's reaching Australia, it is safe to assume that on other occasions also it has completed its long 'pioneering' voyage and no record is known. The eventual history in their new land of most of these birds is unrecorded, but if birds of opposite sex eventually reach here about the same time and be not molested, the commencement of its status as an Australian breeding species is not altogether unlikely." At a meeting of the Western Australian branch of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union on January 26 and of the Western Australian Naturalists' Club on February 3 further instances of the introduction of the Indian Crow to Western Australia were reported and as the circumstances are of considerable instance, as compared with the previous records, they are published herewith.]

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Captain J. L. Ruddiman, 62 Oakover Street, East Fremantle, writes: August 22, 1942: After leaving Cochin, on the west coast of India, I noticed that six common Carrion Crows were flying around the ship. It is a common occurrence for Crows to accompany ships, on which they have recently been feeding, to sea, but they usually return to land while it is near. As our route lay within quite a short distance of land for the first two days and the prevailing S.W. monsoon wind was favourable for their return journey, I was surprised to find that all six birds were still with us when we were well out into the South Indian Ocean.

During the passage one bird built a nest of rope yarns and bits of cotton waste in an open shelter deck alongside the engine room, where coal trimmers were working within a few feet of it. The others took up residence in the cab of a motor truck which